

Amendment and Response to Office Action

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 5-7 are presently pending in the application. Claims 9-24 were added in a previous amendment, but were subjected to a restriction requirement and thus will be pursued in a separate divisional application. The Examiner has suggested corrections to the abstract based upon the use of the word "are disclosed." (Office Action at 2, paragraph 2). In response, Applicant has deleted the two uses of that phrase in the abstract. Claims 1, 3 and 5-7 have been rejected under 35 USC §103 as being obvious in light of Lee (US App. 2003/0042097). (Office Action at page 2, paragraph 3). In light of the amendment to claim 1 and the abstract as set forth above, reconsideration of the amended application is respectfully requested.

LEE DOES NOT TEACH OR SUGGEST THE CLAIMED INVENTION

Applicant respectfully submits that the Lee reference neither teaches each and every element of independent claim 1, nor does it teach elements arranged as required in the presently pending claims. Lee references a fundamentally different problem, and requires the analysis of additional different parameters and different equipment to meet its desired goal. Lee relates to "an apparatus for connecting a laptop computer to a communications network." (Pg. 1, ¶5). According to Lee, "The cord reel assembly 14 is configured for mounting within a headrest of a passenger seat." (Pg. 1, ¶12).

Among other things, Lee does not contemplate the problems overcome by the claimed invention -- namely, how to route cables between passenger seat rows when

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the seat rows may not always maintain the same distance between each other. As the specification of the present invention notes:

[0005] In some transports, particularly in commercial aircraft, it is often desirable to change the distance between the rows of seats to configure the aircraft for a different flight routing or purpose. Unfortunately, because the rows of seats are often electrically coupled to each other using fixed length cables, a change (e.g., an increase) in seat row spacing typically requires replacement of the existing fixed length cables with fixed length cables having an appropriate length. Of course, changing seat-to-seat cabling is a time consuming and expensive process. In addition, many aircraft manufacturers and commercial airline companies do not maintain a sufficient or complete stock (or in some cases any stock) of different length cable assemblies. As a result, the

(US 2007/0262185 A1, p.1, para. 0005).

The Examiner has argued that "the cable of Lee and the cable housing of Lee are capable of the instant claimed intended uses. (Office Action at 2). Specifically, the Examiner urges that "the cable housing 26 of Lee has a configuration such that it is capable of being mounted underneath of a passenger seat, and on the other hand a passenger seating in a second row of seats behind the first row of seats 10 of Lee can reach out to pull and use end 34 of the cable of Lee for receiving electrical signals."

(Office action at 3). Applicant respectfully disagrees. The Examiner's argues that the "intended use limitation" (i.e., connections between different rows of seats) is met by a passenger reaching out and coiling or uncoiling the cable within a given seat. In response, Applicant has amended claim one to specifically add limitations to the

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structure (i.e., the operator selected configurations between the rows, such a commercial airline company or an aircraft manufacturer) to “positively define” the claimed invention over Lee. Contrary to the suggestions of Lee, the present invention does not have any intended use of allowing a passenger to coil or uncoil the multiconductor cable. To the contrary, the claimed multiconductor cable length must be fixed by the operator to accommodate the operator selected configuration of the rows of seats.

Respectfully, the Examiner’s application of Lee is further misplaced insofar as the cable of Lee (or the handling of that cable) neither teaches or suggests the multiconductor cable or the storage unit required by the present claims. Specifically, Lee addresses the last few feet of cable that extend between a seat and a passenger, and is limited to the data connection for a computer, e.g., a single RJ-45 connector (See Lee, at col. 2, line 38). This is in contrast to the present invention, which addresses the cables as they are routed throughout the passenger vehicle, i.e. between rows of seats and other connection points, cables which are thick and stiff, and involve other signals being conducted (hence the requirement of a “multiconductor” cable) such as power, phone or other signals:

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[0007] Additionally, the above-mentioned fixed length cable assemblies used in connection with aircraft must comply with stringent temperature and other environmental requirements. Unfortunately, known cables compliant with these requirements typically utilize a relatively large amount of insulation for each of a plurality of the multiple conductors making up the cable as well as a relatively thick (and stiff) outer jacket. Such large amounts of insulation result in a relatively high stiffness and weight per unit length, which are undesirable characteristics, particularly for seat-to-seat cabling applications in commercial aircraft.

(US App. 2007/0262185 A1, at paragraph 7; see also paragraph 21). That is why the present invention is focused upon the manual coiling and uncoiling of the multiconductor cable, e.g., through winding or manual pushing of the cable into or from the storage unit. Lee, by contrast, simply mentions a mechanism whereby a passenger could release the cable and it would snap back into the headrest. Such a mechanism would not be feasible for the various multiconductor cables, such as the thick and stiff cables discussed above.

In other words, the claimed “multiconductor cable”, unlike the cable for a single laptop computer in Lee, could not use the reel mechanism of Lee to practice the invention. Nor does Lee teach or suggest enabling an operator adjusted (as opposed to a passenger adjusted) multiconductor cable length in response to an operator selected configuration of rows. For all of these reasons, Applicant asserts that Lee does not make obvious the present invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner’s withdrawal of the rejections based on Lee.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims, nos. 1, 3, and 5-7. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees with respect to this communication to Deposit Account No. 14-1131.

Respectfully submitted,



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